

AP/DC ENGLISH IV: SUMMER READING 2017

Welcome to AP/DC English IV! I'm glad you are here.

AP/DC English IV is a college course offered at Ryan High School, one that engages students in the careful reading, critical analysis, and a thoughtful response to college level literature. This course includes intensive study of literature from various genres and time periods, with an emphasis on Anglophone (English language, British Empire) Literature.

Summer reading: You have **two book** to reads over the summer; for the first one you will keep a journal as you read; for the second one, have it read by the second day of class, and come prepared to write an in-class essay.

I. **The first book, non-fiction, is *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance.** As you read it, annotate your copy (use post-it notes if using a library copy). Look for passages in the text that address issues of preparing for college, taking personal responsibility, how schools can help and how they can't, and what the author feels are keys to surviving and succeeding in life. Make a personal reading journal as you read, where you list, with correct MLA citation, 10 passages from the book you feel best represent these topics. Copy the passage onto the top of each journal entry, and underneath, write 200 words in a well-developed paragraph responding to the quote. You may agree, disagree, draw on your own life experience or others you know, but have a well formed strong opinion about the text. This journal is due the second day of class.

II. We will write an in-class essay related to one of these fictional novels, below. **Choose only one of the following books to read as your second book:**

1. *The Sellout* by Paul Beatty – The first (and so far, only) American novel to win the most prestigious British literary award, the Mann Booker Prize. Why? This story is both a tragedy and a comedy as it follows the crazed exploits of a young African American man who decides to own a slave.
2. *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese - Dr Stone's secret passion produces twin sons, both raised to be doctors in an Ethiopian hospital compound. One is a genius but physically challenged, the other is merely smart. Adventures ensue.
3. *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr – A blind girl, growing up in France in the 1930's; a German boy, an orphan, who joins Hitler Youth. What do they have in common? How will their lives intersect? What is in the mysterious puzzle box?
4. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini—The story of multiple generations of a family, set in Afghanistan during times of war and chaos, as seen through the eyes of two women: Laila and Mariam. Goodness and evil, love and sacrifice.
5. *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy – Set in India in the 1960s, this is a love story like Romeo and Juliet. It also offers a poignant lesson in the destructive power of the caste system and moral and political bigotry in general.
6. *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver – A preacher and his family each experience their mission to Africa in a different way; their expectations and differing temperaments affect their wildly diverse experiences.
7. *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith – Several multicultural misfits grow up in 1960's London, experiencing both the joy and prejudice of the strange culture they find themselves part of.
8. *Longbourne*, by Jo Baker. Retells *Pride and Prejudice* from a servant member of the household's point of view. There is love and romance, tragedy and hope, intensely researched historical detail, and an entirely different perspective. Just like "fan fiction", only better written and a lot more interesting!

III. Summer fun

Get out there and have interesting experiences, because interesting people do a wide variety of things! Travel, take in cultural events, participate in sports or the arts, go to camp, whatever you enjoy. Visit prospective colleges if you can. Take the SAT. Get a job or volunteer in your community. Read a wide variety of things, both fiction and non-fiction.

Content Disclaimer:

Dual Credit English IV is a college-level class. Necessarily, because advanced literature courses deal with all facets of living, there will be talk of life, of death, and of the various human desires. Mature, college-level discussion of topics concerning identity, gender, race, society and class will ensue. Students will fine tune their skills of listening respectfully to each other while participating appropriately in class discussions. There may be transgressive language (there will certainly be beautiful language) contained in the literature we read, study, discuss, or write about. If you feel delicate about such things or are easily offended, let's talk together about the challenges you might face. You can expect mature discussion of a wide variety of subjects, as prompted by the work under examination.

I'm looking forward to having you in my class! It's going to be a good year.

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